



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

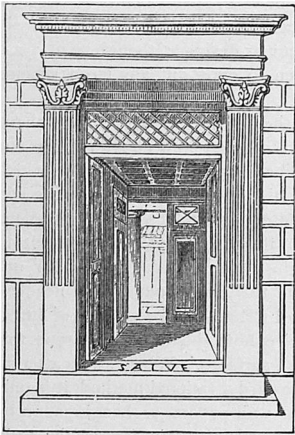
We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE HOUSE

THE POMPEIAN HOUSE.



ENTRANCE TO THE POMPEIAN HOUSE.

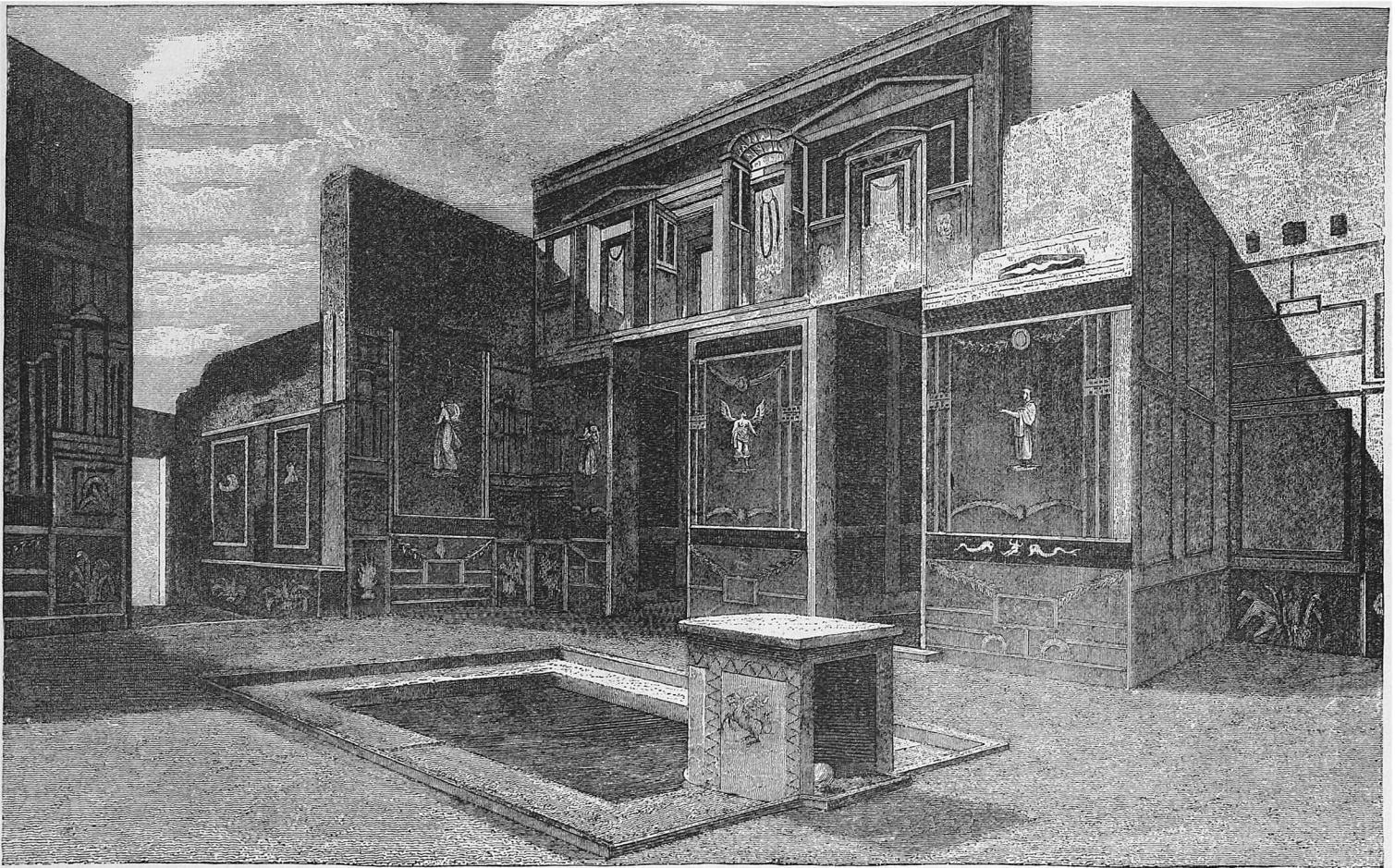
reasonable of all recent styles, was very strongly influenced by these discoveries. The succeeding "Empire" style, like that of the "Adamses," carried imitation too far, attempting to build up modern chimney-pieces and the like out of ancient forms de-

THE most beautiful and most convenient modern styles of interior decoration owe every thing of which they can boast to the discoveries made at Pompeii and Herculaneum in the latter part of the last century. The "Adams" style in England was avowedly modelled upon the decorative works unearthed in these Græco-Roman towns. In France the "Louis Seize," the most elegant as well as the most reason-

the English, and, in some regards, even more beautiful than the Louis XVI. Compared with interiors of the "Empire" period, many of which may yet be studied in New York and other great cities, the Colonial houses are superior in every respect. We have many times noticed, with commendation, the efforts of some of our younger architects to take up the Colonial tradition and adapt the style to our present exigencies. The new features introduced into household life in the century now drawing to a close are not such as to call for very decided modifications. Plumbing, gas and electric lighting apparatus hardly need to be taken into consideration in a decorative scheme. The last-mentioned invention offers, indeed, many chances to designers to introduce new and graceful forms, but it should be perfectly easy to make those forms harmonize with any style of decoration drawn from classic models; meanwhile we wish to show that, as regards the larger elements of interior decoration, these models have not been exhausted. We still have much to learn from them, and we might approach much nearer than we have yet done to the principles that governed the decoration of the Pompeian house, with none but good results.

There are not wanting those who maintain that, even with our modern requirements and in a northern climate, the simplest thing for architect and decorator, when dealing with the problems presented by a private habitation, would be to return to the ancients. But, without going very profoundly into the matter, it is easy to

the sun and warmed by hot-air flues. But, disregarding climatic questions, the Greek house, as described by Athenæus, and the Græco-Latin house, such as it is still to be seen at Pompeii, offer many important hints to modern decorators. The exterior was, in general, very plain, it being considered foolish and, in a republic, improper to attempt to compete with the magnificence of the temples and other public buildings. The interior was divided in a marked yet not too obvious manner into a part which was semi-public, and the more private portion, the gynæceum, sometimes erroneously compared to the Turkish harem, but to which intimate friends of the family were freely admitted. These two apartments surrounded each a small court open in the centre, immediately above a tank or basin with or without a fountain. In the rear of the interior apartment, if space permitted, there was usually a small garden, laid out much as the interior of a modern hot-house is, though in the open air—a plan to be recommended to proprietors of small city gardens or back yards. Around the second court were the sleeping apartments, mere cells (cellæ), small, bare of furniture except what was necessary, severely though elegantly decorated—in short, just what a modern hygienist would tell us a sleeping-room should be. The dining-rooms, in the case of a man who filled a great place in society, were placed between the two apartments; but there was commonly what answered the purpose of a private dining-room between the inner apartment and the little garden.



THE ATRIUM OF THE HOUSE OF CERES AT POMPEII, SHOWING THE "CELLÆ" (SLEEPING APARTMENTS).

signed for quite other purposes. Our own "Colonial" style was a reflection of these European attempts to emulate classic grace and simplicity. Owing to a combination of refined taste and scarcity of means—the very opposite of which obtains to-day—our Colonial work was at once more severe and more elegant than

see that their culinary and sanitary arrangements would not have suited us. Nor would their arrangements for heating and for shutting out the cold of winter, unless in our extreme Southern States and in the case of a rich man like Pliny, who had his winter apartments distinct from those which he occupied in summer, exposed to

So much for the plan. There are reasons for believing that the ceilings were not always flat, but had a pitched roof when the space included was so large as to require it—which, however, was seldom the case. The decoration was strictly conventional, even when the human figure was the motive, elegant, subordinated to

its position, and was far oftener painted than sculptured. Contrary to the popular belief, the interiors of the Middle Ages were far richer in sculpture, such as it was, and poorer in color than those of classic times. The wall decorations sometimes showed a processional frieze. They were sometimes intended to carry out the idea of the architect by simulated perspectives. In either case, small pictures painted on the walls or hung against them were often introduced. The latter were in wax colors, on wooden or stone tablets, or, in the case of miniatures, on ivory. Such a wealth of statuary as is shown in the illustration on the opposite page could be possible only in the house of a very rich man, as Pansa is supposed to have been.

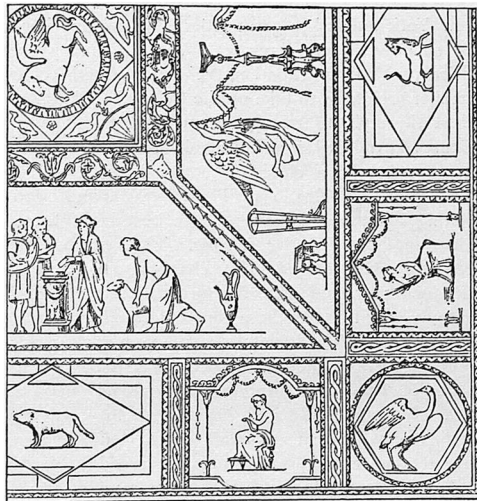
Elegant as the Pompeian decorations are, it is not safe to take them as examples of Greek workmanship or of Greek taste. The workmen may have been Hellenes, but they wrought under Roman, not under Greek supervision. The Attic simplicity of which we hear so much was undoubtedly real to a degree to which we could hardly accustom ourselves. An Athenian citizen of the first rank possibly possessed a picture or two in wax paint, a few small bronzes and terra cottas, perhaps a marble statue or so. He had a little court with a colonnade of Doric columns; a little garden with beds and paths hollowed in the rock, an abundance of festivals calling for extra decorations of flowers and green branches; his household utensils, instead of being ugly, were, all of them, pretty; and his wife and daughters were dressed in the most beautiful and simple fashion ever devised for female use in a warm climate. For the rest, his business and his pleasures, as in the case of the vast majority of our own citizens, kept him very much out of doors; and he gave to religion and the State the magnificence which he wisely denied himself. An Athenian, or a Roman inspired by Athenian taste, would despise most of our boasted New York interiors as barbarian.

We have given, perhaps, a sufficient general idea of the Pompeian house, and of the way in which it differed from its prototype, the Greek house of the Attic period. Before going into particulars it is, we think, necessary to disabuse our readers, who may have never seen actual Greek work, of some ideas which they are almost sure to have formed respecting it from engravings and modern imitations.

In the first place, all Greek decoration of whatever period seems to be free-hand work, done without mechanical aids, such as stencils, and with little regard for merely mechanical accuracy of repetition; nevertheless, a high degree of neatness and of accuracy was attained, Greek handwork approaching, in fact, the technical cleverness of modern Japanese work. We are speaking, it must be understood, of ordinary workmen, not of artists. When a modern house-painter copies one of the simple classic designs for borders, a row of palmettes or a band of key pattern, he does so by means of a stencil, and his sole aim is mechanical exactness. The Greek workman drew the design free-hand, and his principal aim was to adapt it to its place. The difference can hardly be estimated except by one who has seen simple conventional decoration done in the Greek manner. A mere band of it on an otherwise bare wall is far more satisfactory ornament than the richest diaper-work done by stencils, even when that is afterward touched up by hand. As to engravings, the most faithful tend to give a false impression of the uniformity and mechanical neatness of their originals. As we have said, it is true that a high degree of perfection was reached in that line, so high that not one modern decorative worker in a thousand can approach it. It naturally strikes all copyists so much that they invariably tend to exaggerate it. Then they are forced to use mechanical means—straight edges, box-wood curves, and so on; and the engraver in his turn exaggerates still more the unnatural stiffness of their lines. The purest and cleanest bit of Greek outline work shows a certain play of the brush, an occasional hesitancy, a "feeling for the line," which brings it into relation with good modern artistic drawing, though, again, much too pure and decided to be classed with that. We must think, then, of the commonest and simplest patterns being drawn in a clean and decided manner, but not uniformly or mechanically so.

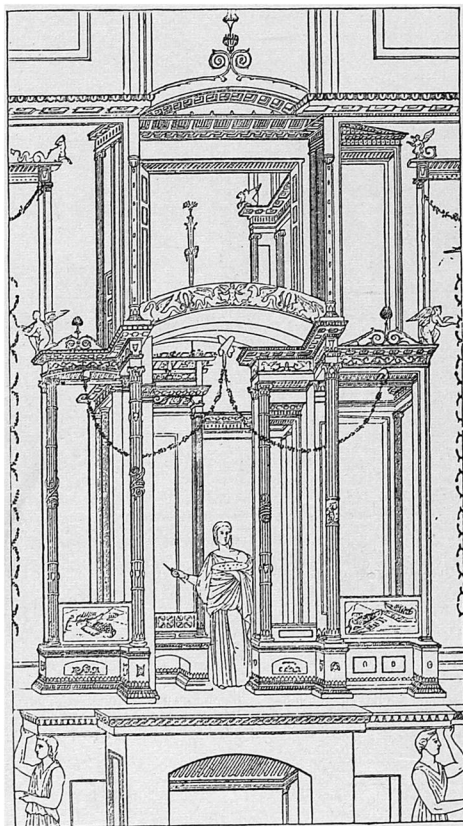
Next, as regards materials. Our imitations are almost always confined to distemper, which has many faults. It dries of quite a different tone from that which it has while wet. It has a disagreeable texture; and it is easily soiled, water stained and rubbed. The Greeks used it, but only, it would appear, to a limited extent,

except in later times, as at Pompeii. The larger portions of their wall surfaces were in colored plasters brought to a high finish, and absolutely permanent as to color. On this smooth, hard ground of exquisite texture the decorations were painted in distemper or in hot wax paints, or, in the case of very important work, in the wet plaster by the methods of true fresco. The colors most used for large surfaces in early days appear to have been red, yellow and brown ochres; white of a creamy tone, and—in small sleeping rooms mostly—black.



PART OF AN ANCIENT CEILING FOUND AT POMPEII.

Their only blue appears to have been cobalt, and it was probably too costly to have been often mixed with plaster and applied over large surfaces. In refining the natural earths they aimed at tone and not, as our color makers do, at chemical purity. The colored plates, therefore, which pretend to illustrate Greek polychro-



WALL PAINTING (RESTORED) FOUND AT POMPEII.

matic decoration are, if anything, more misleading than the uncolored engravings. As every artist and artistic decorator knows, our crude pigments need to be blended with others before they can be used, especially over large surfaces.

In these two particulars we need not think to copy the antique. The art of making really fine colored plasters and mortars is a lost art; it would take much costly experimenting before it could be revived. And we cannot

hope for trained workmen capable of drawing a key-band or palmette pattern in the Greek fashion. We must therefore continue to use other media, and either no patterns or richer patterns done in a greater variety of low, harmonious tones. The use of bold, decided patterns in black on red, or brown on yellow or white—strong contrasts which the ancients knew how to manage so as to attain a satisfying harmony—is beyond us. In our hands, or in the hands of our workmen, they result in nothing but harsh and vulgar effects. Much may, however, be learned from any authentic piece of Greek work—a painted stele, or vase, or terra cotta—about the decorative use of strongly contrasted values, which will be of use to the amateur or designer, though he may not be able to get workmen to carry out any large scheme of the kind.

On another point the Pompeian decorations have much to show us which can very well be followed in our house decorations. The simplest of them, those which most nearly approach the classic Greek style, are laid out on a system a better than which has never been imagined. Our way of dividing all wall spaces horizontally, by frieze and dado, is one that calls aloud for improvement. It is true that, with our many needless doors and windows and tall and bulky articles of furniture, we seldom perceive how absurdly arbitrary is this manner of treating wall surfaces. When we do attempt to go a step further toward a rational method, it is only by the use of striped wall-papers or hangings or by simulating a frame around each division of the wall, clinging closely to the already existing lines of door and window, ceiling and floor, or dado. It was far otherwise with the decorator of classic times. To him each wall space was as so much blank paper, on which he could design what he pleased. He, of course, took account of the existing contours, but did not hold himself bound to run his decorative divisions parallel with and at equal distances from them at all points. He seldom used other shapes than the rectangle, with an occasional triangular pediment; but he used these forms, which seemed to reinforce and strengthen the architectural lines of the room, with very great freedom. Suppose a modern house painter has to decorate the upright space between two windows. He is almost certain to run a border around it so many inches deep, and to add inside of it an imitation of a wooden moulding, making the entire space look like a huge and weak piece of paneling, which no decent carpenter would think of perpetrating in wood. Upon that the owner of the room proceeds to hang a picture, the frame of which cuts across the simulated moulding and shows it to be a mockery of the sort that is not even hollow. In the best Pompeian designs the decorator has inscribed his rectangle or combination of rectangles precisely how he pleased, with the object of improving the proportions of the space or of the room. He would perhaps nearly fill the space with a single large rectangle, as our man invariably does; or he would put a little one nearly in the centre; or a square with two oblongs, one above, the other below; or a square with an oblong beneath and a triangular pediment above; or, in short, any one of a great number of combinations which might seem to him best suited to the place. And the next division of the wall might be spaced off on a different system; but the whole wall or part of a room likely to be seen at a glance would be made to balance. It is easy to perceive that such a clever system as this might make any room look handsome, though decorated with nothing but a few straight lines; for the irregular and badly proportioned spaces left by the builder would be reduced to symmetry and beautiful proportions. And it is quite a practical method of decorating; for we have many designers who understand proportion well enough, and our house painters are commonly able to lay a flat tint and to draw a straight line by the aid of a plummet or a straight edge. But one needs not stop at this point. If one can secure the modest talent which is needed, a figure, or trophy, or bouquet of flowers can be painted in the centre of some of the panels. It is not at all necessary that classical forms be adhered to. The figures may be in modern costumes, the flowers out of the next florist's window. But they must, of course, be treated with a certain degree of flatness to keep them in harmony with the flat ground and the architectural-looking lines. These lines themselves may be varied in countless ways by dots, leaves, small rosettes and so forth; examples will be seen in several of our illustrations; but this requires considerable care, as it is work which is rather above our workmen, while an artist, and still more

an amateur, will be likely to find it tedious. The several compartments may, however, be painted in varying tones, and there is nothing to prevent the system being applied to wood panelling and the arrangement of leather, painted tapestry and other hangings.

It will be objected that a room so decorated must look very "severe." So it will before it is furnished; but let us assure our lady readers that they do not know what beautiful drapery is until they see it in some such room. Handsome portières and window curtains especially of soft stuffs, hanging straight or caught up in the graceful Louis XVI. fashion, will, of themselves, immediately take away all appearance of undue severity. They may be patterned in the stuff or ornamented with embroidery, but should not be stiffened with appliqué. Flowers and growing plants and, above all, handsome human beings look particularly well in such surroundings. We may mention, by the way, that the former home of Mr. Clarence Cook, the art critic, was so decorated; and Mr. Alma Tadema's house in London is a striking example of Greek principles properly applied. Many useful hints may be obtained from engravings after his pictures.

We must end by repeating the warning that most of the Pompeian wall paintings can only be considered as examples of a debased style. This is most evident in the attempts at perspective illusion which abound, but which yet are not so bad as they seem. The habit probably arose out of the practice of painting the walls of the narrow gardens with representations of trellises and arbors. In the best examples of this manner, as in the illustration on page 74, the perspective is of a very conventional sort, and the values are managed in exactly the opposite way that they are in our modern landscape painting—namely, to hold everything up to the one plane; so that the painting does not result in illusion, but only suggests distance. It need not be said that refinements of this sort are entirely beyond the reach of our house painters; and there is no occasion to quarrel with them on that account, as the simpler designs which do not play fast and loose with effects of perspective, are in much better taste.

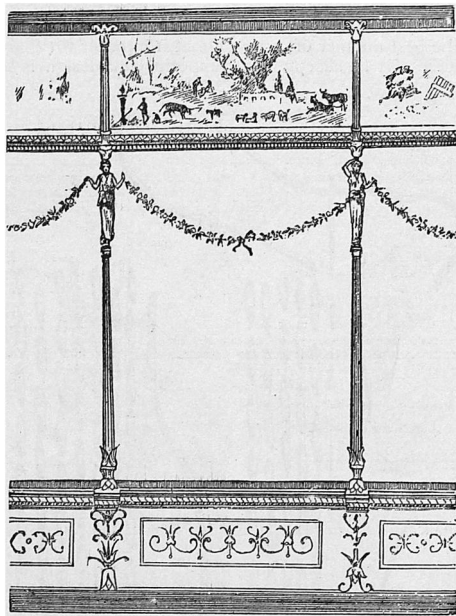
ROGER RIORDAN.

A NOVEL material for wall decoration has been adapted, at Mr. Gleeson White's suggestion, to a new studio in London, according to *The Artist*, of that city: "The corrugated millboard used by chemists to pack medicine bottles has been employed for a white frieze. The fluted surface is painted on delicate lemon green, with a narrow shelf of palest yellow below it, the wide surface down the skirting being covered with a lemon-colored canvas. The whole effect is extremely dainty, and the new application of a common substance is already being followed by others, who at this season turn their fancy to new decoration of their houses. When carefully finished, it is not unlike the fluted silk hangings which were a feature of the Adams period."

A WRITER in the New York Tribune points out that artistic goods for furniture coverings and draperies, as a rule, are by no means the dearest in the shops, and tells what to ask for among the goods of reasonable price: "Muslin for curtains, shown in striped and checked ground, with beautifully embroidered designs; Madras for curtains (sold by the yard or pair); cotton tapes for curtains or coverings (finest colorings and effects, many of them direct copies of the most expensive goods); cotton pongees for draperies (in imi-

tation of the Chinese and India silks, same design, color and weight, but cotton); chenille stuffs for curtains (plain or figured, by the yard or pair); denim for draperies (same as overalls are made of); cretonnes, petit-points, ramies, spun-silks, Canton flannel draperies, and cotton plush. All of these goods should be examined by any one who wishes inexpensive but artistic fabrics."

BETWEEN pictures and decoration there is a great gulf fixed, and most of those who rashly venture to bridge



POMPEIAN MURAL DECORATION.

this chasm fall between its rocky sides and perish in the attempt. Japanese art is superbly decorative. So, too, are the art of the Renaissance period, some of the Gothic, the Moorish, the Indian and many of the savage arts. But at other periods too familiar to need naming, every sort of ornament has been treated as though it were part of a picture—that is, with relief, perspective and other pictorial qualities not necessarily required or (some of them) possible in purely decorative art.

IN buying furniture one should avoid excessively curved pieces. The curves are almost always bad, and the

It is well known to artists that the most beautiful curves are the subtlest; in other words, those that approach nearest to the straight line. They also, of course, put the least strain on the material. Cabinets and all heavy pieces of furniture should stand upon legs tall enough to allow the sweeping brush to get underneath.

HINTS FOR THE HOME.

IN WINDOW draperies a novelty are the Tunisian curtains, which come in several colorings, of which the old rose is perhaps the handsomest. These have narrow cross stripes of silk in the same shade as the ground work, and are \$4.50 a pair.

CORDUROY has come to be regarded as so useful for upholstery purposes that it is now made in many of the new shades of greens, blues and old reds. It is well suited for curtains in halls, libraries and dining-rooms, and it also makes serviceable cushions and pillows for chairs and sofas. It is made in both wide and narrow stripes, and these may be agreeably combined in two shades of the same color for doorway curtains.

ROSE LEAVES should be dried in abundance during the summer, as they are useful not only for potpourri, but for pillows and sachets as well. A beautiful sachet for the bureau drawer is made of a strip of fine white linen, thirteen inches long and five inches wide. This is fringed at both ends, and above the fringe is a simple pattern of drawn work about one half an inch wide. The words, "Rose Leaves," embroidered on it in pink silk in outline, and a few rose petals done in the same way are scattered over it. The sides are sewed together, the bag is filled with dried rose leaves, and the ends are fastened together with narrow pink ribbon, which is run in and out of the drawn work and finished with a bow. Dried lavender may be used in the same way, when the embroidery should be done in lavender silk, ribbon of the same shade being used for the bows.

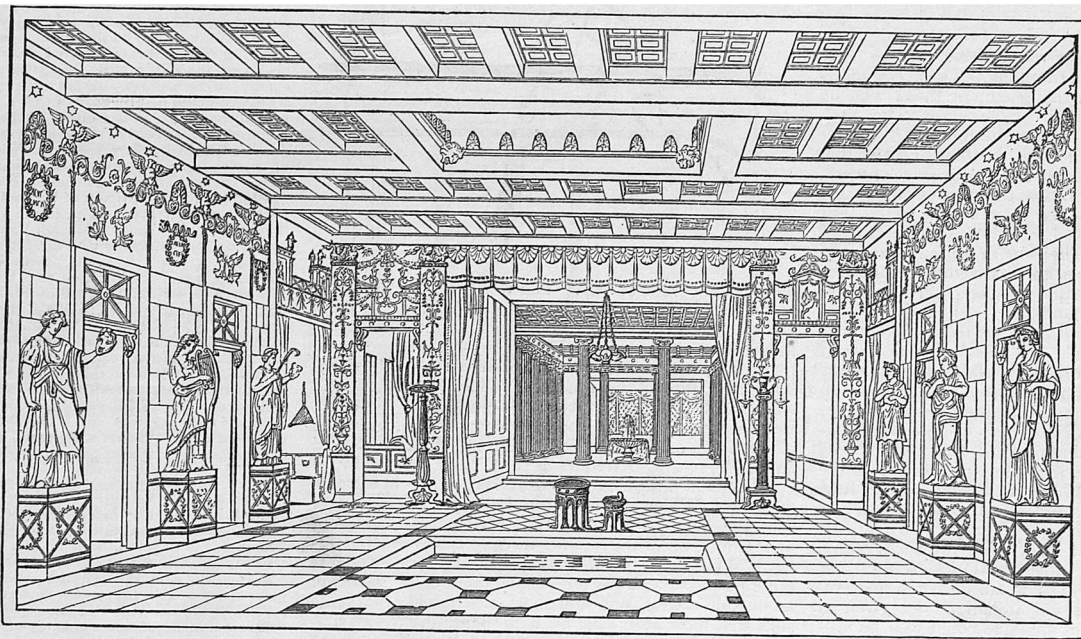
COTTON RUGS of Japanese manufacture, in dark colorings and of good size, are sold at \$3 and \$4 apiece. With reasonable care they will wear long, and as they are thick and rich looking, they always give an air of refinement to a room. This is a good time to buy woolen rugs of all kinds, as it is difficult for dealers to take care of them in the summer months, and they often sell them at very low prices in consequence. Camel's-hair rugs of large size sell from \$12 to \$15 which in the winter time would doubtless bring much more, and pretty little Anatolian rugs of soft colorings are only \$5 and \$6. These may be used not only upon the floor, but they may be spread on the seat of a small sofa which is worn or defaced, or of an unpleasant color. A rug of this kind, with plenty of pillows and a Bulgarian scarf on the back, often transforms such a sofa into a really artistic piece of furniture.

JAPANESE curtains are now on exhibition which are really works of art. The needlework is so well executed that it is almost impossible to tell which is the right and which the wrong side. They are in three different shades—rose, blue and a lightfawn—and are covered with clusters of hand-embroidered flowers. Now \$35 a window is asked for them; not long since the price was \$75. Vestibule curtains in Louis XIV. lace, cream tinted, are \$35 a pair. They are narrow, and are intended to hang perfectly plain in order to show the beauty of the floral designs wrought upon them.

A TABLE-COVER of dark red velours is trimmed with a band of gold galloon tied at the corners into bow-knots. The price is \$14, but it is a style of decoration easily done, as the braid needs only be basted on the cloth in the required pattern, and afterward stitched neatly and securely upon the machine. A lining and narrow silk fringe of the color of the velours complete the cover.

PURE white hammocks made of bleached cord are something new. They have wide ruffles of the same falling from the edge, which give a graceful effect, and, piled with red pillows, they are quite picturesque. A hammock like this may take the place of a sofa in the family sitting-room, if there is space large enough to hang it without interfering with the other furniture, and it will be found a delightful resting place in summer. It need not be taken down when winter comes, and if a bright-colored rug is spread in it for warmth, and plenty of pillows are used, it is always a decorative feature in the room.

NO sitting-room or bedroom, especially a guest-room, is complete without a scrap-basket, and it can be bought much cheaper than formerly. Large baskets are always best; they should stand firmly, and be of simple shape. Such a one now costs fifty cents; it used to be two or three times as much. Some of the baskets are so prettily woven in grasses of the natural color that they really need no trimming at all. If trimming is desired, however, a wide, full puff of bright-colored silk is sewed around the top, with a scarf of the same ending in a large bow. A pretty arrangement is to fasten together three small very open-work baskets, which have previously been lined with silk, sewing a curtain ring in the centre to serve as a handle. This may be surmounted by a handsome bow to cover the place of joining. A basket of this kind should stand upon the table; it serves to hold work and papers and anything which, if not put in some such receptacle, would be likely to make a litter.



INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE OF A POMPEIAN MILLIONAIRE.

manner in which they are obtained—by steaming and bending—weakens the fibre of the wood. If they are venerated, the strain on the thin veneer cannot be borne. It is sure to crack and come away from its foundation.